

NYPL RESEARCH LIBRARIES



3 3433 06740754 8

ZEE

Robson

Baboon
ZEE

2 1/2

The Future of the Churches

By ROGER W. BABSON

President Babson's Statistical Organization

Making Good In Business

12mo, \$1.25

The famous Business Expert here applies a fundamental knowledge of business principles to daily business life. The latest work by the author of "Fundamentals of Prosperity" is crammed with the most valuable sort of hints and suggestions for the attainment of a well-balanced, normal, successful, business career.

Fundamentals of Prosperity

12mo, \$1.00

Western Christian Advocate says: "Have you heard of Roger Babson, the great statistician and business expert? Then listen; he has written a book. You can read it in an hour. It is just the thing you want to reach the apathetic man who passes up the church and spends his powers and energies on patriotism and good citizenship. Get this book at once. Read it."

The Future of the Churches

Historic and Economic Facts 12mo, \$1.00

MR. BABSON shows in a constructive way how the future prosperity and achievement of the church are dependent on its ability to enter fully into the manifold life of the people, and stand as firmly for social and civic righteousness as for the meeting and supplying distinctly spiritual needs.

The Future of the Churches

Historic and Economic Facts

By

ROGER W. BABSON

*President of the Babson Statistical Organization,
Author of "The Fundamentals of Prosperity,"
and "Making Good in Business"*



NEW YORK

CHICAGO

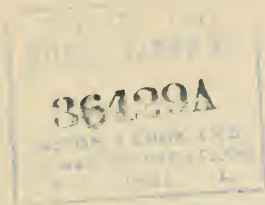
Fleming H. Revell Company

LONDON

AND

EDINBURGH

Copyright, 1921, by
FLEMING H. REVELL COMPANY



New York : 158 Fifth Avenue
Chicago : 17 North Wabash Ave.
London : 21 Paternoster Square
Edinburgh : 75 Princes Street

To
GEORGE W. COLEMAN
President of the Babson Institute

Introduction

IT is almost a truism that any message which is to *reach* the heart must come *from* the heart. But familiar as the truth is, it involves far-reaching consequences which are oftentimes overlooked. It means, for example, that a *preacher's* message, if it is to carry its full weight, must be wrought out in the crucible of his own experience. Not that we can ever hope to comprehend in this fragmentary, earthly life all the length and breadth of the power of God and of His will for men; but that even the partial truths which have been learned in the school of experience have more power to touch and help the hearts of others than whole volumes of words simply recited by rote.

The world to-day is waiting and longing for men who can say "I *know* this is true, for I have proved it in my own life." The signs of the times all point to the dawning of a new age of faith; but it must be a faith which proves itself by its works. Religion, like everything else, is being subjected to the practical test. Men are anxious to learn how to live; they are reaching out for an explanation

of life's mysteries, and for help in solving its problems. If any man can satisfy this craving he will not have to suffer for lack of a hearing. But he can never do it until the message he preaches has become a part of his own life. The truths he proclaims must be something more than mere intellectual abstractions; they must be warm with love and virile with power and tender with sympathy,—in a word, pulsating throughout with life. It is his business and the business of the Church to build up religion. Religion is “the life of God in the soul of man.”

The convictions which dominate my conception of the ministry are thus intensely practical. Were I to choose a motto for my ministry, it would perhaps be the words of Jesus: “I came that they may have life, and may have it abundantly.” In those words Jesus put His finger upon the deepest and most universal aspiration of the human heart. Men want to get the most out of life, and one of their bitterest experiences is the realization of the barriers which hem them in on every side. The transitoriness of this earthly life, the unending conflict between one's self and his environment, and the inner stress and strain of opposing interests, all combine to thwart his desire for a full, free, vigorous personality. It is only through Jesus that these confining barriers are levelled. For the

Church to proclaim Him as the Saviour and Life-bringer of the world is to bring a message which can never grow old.

But the yearning of the heart does not stop with itself; sooner or later, every one begins to grope for the divine above him. Centuries of experience have verified Augustine's confession: "Thou hast made us for Thyself, and our hearts are restless until they rest in Thee." Science answers the craving in part, and so do history and philosophy; but the only complete satisfaction is in Jesus. In His tender pity we see the manifestation of God's compassion; in His interest in men,—even in the trivial affairs of their daily life—we see the divine interest. The Church must reflect this sympathy and interest.

Illuminating thus the social relations of mankind, the Church can satisfy yet another of the great yearnings of every heart. Perhaps there is no greater boon which Jesus can bestow upon this confused and groping age, in which bitter strife and tumult are so strangely blended with moral idealism and altruistic service, than to point the road to a happy and prosperous society. Never will there be any abiding peace between the various classes of society until the spirit of Jesus controls them all. The sense of kinship to a common Father must underlie the consciousness of human brotherhood. With all my heart I believe that

the gospel of Jesus is the only power which can bring order out of the chaos of modern society. There is work in abundance for the political economist and the business expert and the statesman, but at heart the great problems which are vexing the world to-day are all moral problems. The Church, therefore, is recreant to her duty if she ignores them. Details of administration she must leave to others; but the principles which lie at the foundation of all social welfare it is hers to proclaim and illustrate.

Running all through her ministry there must be a passionate interest in the well-being of all sorts and conditions of men. The handicapped ought to find in her a wise and loving friend; the oppressed ought to feel free to turn to her as their champion; the mean and selfish ought to have good cause to fear her stinging rebuke; while those who are sleeping the sleep of the lazy or the self-satisfied ought to be roused from their lethargy by her bugle-call to service. As the great scholar of old took all knowledge for his province, so the Church must take all mankind as the object of her ministry.

No lines of any kind can be allowed to divide men one from the other in religion. The Church must know no East and West, no rich and poor, no ignorant foreigner and cultured descendant of the Pilgrims, for all must be

loved and served alike by her as they were by her Master. That she has sometimes been sadly remiss in this duty is only too painfully obvious,—and it is due very largely to these seeds of neglect, partiality and pride that she is now reaping the harvest of alienation and indifference. Only as she learns her lesson and proves her repentance by a love whose genuineness and universality can never be questioned, can she ever expect to recover the confidence of those who now pass her by in indifference or scorn.

To create and foster this truly social spirit I conceive to be one of the prime duties of the Church. Another is to lead people to a realization of the fact that what is called missions is a part of this larger social ministry. It is hard to understand why there should be such a widespread antipathy to a form of service which is so essential to any genuine religion. Too long has our missionary work been regarded as a kind of adjunct to one's Christianity,—to be taken or left according to the taste of the individual. The disastrous results of such a misconception are too serious to allow it to continue any longer. It means a stunted religion for the Church, and a neglect of the highest welfare of some of our fellow-men which is bound to have the most tragic consequences. Missions ought to be taken out of the little side compartment into which the

Church has too often relegated them, and be recognized as a vital part of the one great work of ministry for which the Church stands.

Patiently and persistently the minister must strive to educate his people into the idea that ministry to the sick and sorrowing and tempted of the parish, to the boys and girls in their time of storm and stress, to the unfortunate victims of social injustice, and to those who still sit in the darkness of sin and suffering because the light of life has never been carried to them,—that all these forms of service are on a par, every one of them vitally important in connection with the basic economic principles emphasized in this book.

It certainly is with deep pleasure that I commend the work of my fellow townsman, Roger W. Babson, who is a member of my church. He is not only a loyal and valued friend but a parishioner whose unfailing support in the work of the Church is an encouragement and inspiration. No one realizes more than he the difficulties in his way, the snares laid by opponents, and the errors into which he may be led. But we both are seeking the truth and he attempts in this little book fearlessly to present it.

CARL M. GATES.

*Pastor, Congregational Church,
Wellesley Hills, Mass.*

Preface

OWING to peculiar inherited opinions relative to churches, among people who are logical, or at least consistent, upon almost every other subject, the writer has tried very hard to be fair in the presentation of this subject.

In revising the book he has also tried to avoid making it a preachment of any sort, but rather to confine it to a review and forecast, based upon historical analysis.

He acknowledges indebtedness especially to "The Commercial & Financial Chronicle," in view of the material used in Chapter Four, under the sub-heading "Churches and Capitalism."

R. W. B.

Wellesley Hills, Massachusetts.

Contents

I.	THE CHURCH—PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE	17
	What History Teaches.	
	Why the Church is Weak To-day.	
	What the Church will Preach.	
II.	ANOTHER POINT OF VIEW	33
	The Question of To-day.	
	What the Hebrews Taught.	
	Charities and Churches.	
III.	COMPETITORS OF THE CHURCH	51
	Lodges, Schools and Theatres.	
	Philosophy and Democracy.	
	Questionnaires Proposed.	
IV.	TEACHINGS OF JESUS	71
	Judging Others.	
	Retaliation, Wealth and Worship.	
	An Appeal	
V.	A POSSIBILITY	85
	Church and Capitalism.	
	One Suggestion.	
	Conclusion.	
	APPENDIX	III

I

The Church—Past, Present, and Future

I

THE CHURCH—PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

A STUDY of history shows clearly that churches have prospered when they have given a *motive* for man to be religious.

The basis of political economy, that "all natural actions of man are for the purpose either of avoiding pain or gaining happiness," apparently underlies the growth of the world's great religions. In fact, according to the economists, all civilization has been constructed on these two natural desires. Governments, industries and individuals have succeeded or fallen as they have or have not utilized this fundamental law of human nature.

Of course, some will at once take exception to this statement and insist that such is not in accordance with the teachings of Jesus; but here again the economist would retort by claiming that the distinction which we make between "selfishness" and "unselfishness" really involves an analysis of the words "happiness" and "unhappiness." Some persons

20 THE FUTURE OF THE CHURCHES

attempt to secure happiness by acquiring, and others attempt to secure happiness by serving; while what is considered happiness by one is unhappiness for another. Hence the claim can be made that even Jesus did not ignore this fundamental law of human nature, but instead strove to show people how to be truly happy and how to avoid real unhappiness.

ECONOMIC METHODS

Although the Galilean prophet taught that we should be willing to lose our lives, yet He usually added "that we may save them." He preached that we must die "*to live*," and should give up temporal things for *something much more worth-while*. This is very clearly brought out in His Sermon on the Mount and in many parables. If we forget the ideas of our childhood and study the New Testament to-day with this thought in mind, it appears fairly probable that Jesus clearly recognized that man's basic nature is to seek pleasure and to avoid pain, and used this as a foundation for His teachings. Likewise, to a limited extent, this same theory is apparently the foundation of the other most successful religious teachers of history.

Jesus capitalized this inherent desire when He said, "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden." Why? "*And I will give you rest.*" "Take my yoke upon you."

Why? "*For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.*" When studying the first four books of the New Testament, this is most evident; namely, that Jesus continually based His teachings on this inherent desire of man to obtain pleasure and to avoid pain. On the other hand, He showed the people that real pleasure consists not in the things of the world, the lust of the flesh and such pleasures as the Gentiles sought. In His discussion of pain, He told the people to "fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear him which is able to kill *both* body and soul." In the same chapter (Matthew 10) we find the words: "He that findeth his life shall lose it, and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it."

Later, in the nineteenth chapter of Matthew, we find the words: "Every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or *lands* for my name's sake shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life;" and then He concludes by saying that "the last shall be first and the first shall be last."

Turn to any discourse by Jesus—claims the economist—and He will be found always to have given His hearers a *practical reason* for conforming to the laws of God. He held up before them a punishment of "everlasting

22 THE FUTURE OF THE CHURCHES

death" if they did not live right and a reward in the form of "real life" if they did live right.

Moreover, when turning to the Old Testament and studying the teachings of the patriarchs and prophets, we also apparently find this inherent desire in man capitalized to an infinitely greater degree. There was little preaching that the Israelites should do right for right's sake, but rather that they should avoid being annihilated from the face of the earth!

WHAT HISTORY TEACHES

But let us turn to more recent history. Since the founding of the Christian Church, the same law certainly is apparent. The rule has been that when churches have held up a practical motive for religion, they have prospered; but not at other times. The great Reformation under Luther grew out of his teaching the people that they needed no longer to pay tribute to the Church of Rome in order to be saved; but that they could be "saved by faith,"—simple faith. To the man who had been spending all his earnings in purchasing indulgences from the priests of the Roman Church, this was a great revelation, and the new Protestant wing spread rapidly all over Northern Europe.

Not only did Luther give men a reason for

leaving the Roman Church, but he also drew within this new organization hundreds of thousands who had drifted away from the Church altogether. He offered the people salvation by faith—a salvation which heretofore they thought could be purchased only with gold.

But it was only a short while¹—the next century—before people became callous to this doctrine and needed another motive for rallying to the Church, another motive for living right. At the psychological moment came Calvin, John Knox, and the other founders of sects which we have to-day,—Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists, etc. In order to inject motive power into this new Protestantism, they went much further than did Luther. These men were not content with telling the people *how* to be saved; but insisted that, if not saved, they would be “eternally damned”! This was the beginning of the “hell-fire and brimstone” era which held its own until recently. Certainly, these leaders capitalized man’s inherent desire to avoid pain, not to mention utter destruction! They preached not “right for right’s sake;” they urged attendance at church from no sentimental reason, *but rather to save one’s soul from eternal damnation!*

¹ Luther himself made a great mistake in opposing the masses in the Peasants’ War.

24 THE FUTURE OF THE CHURCHES

Moreover, a study of any of the great revivals which have taken place during the past centuries, will show every one of them to have been based on this same teaching of reward and punishment. The great religious leaders of the churches have taught that right living will be rewarded, but that disobedience to the laws of God will be punished. The more insistent the preachers have been along these lines, the more successful they apparently have been. In direct proportion to the teaching of reward and punishment, have our present churches flourished since their humble beginnings. Furthermore, this applies to almost every religion and creed. This is especially true of the New England churches.

I have the greatest respect for preachers. I believe that they are much more thoughtful and consistent than are the members of their congregations. Their methods should appeal to thoughtful men of intellect; but many of them make very little headway. Their teaching is like a wonderfully perfect watch which lacks only a spring! The "spring" which their sermons lack is the "reward and punishment" feature. These preachers are trying to teach that we should do right for right's sake, which clearly is contrary to economic law and certainly to the lessons of history.

Does not this criticism apply to-day to many of the most earnest preachers throughout the

land? Otherwise, why are so many churches declining in power and influence?

WHY THE CHURCH IS WEAK TO-DAY

To the economist the answer is very clear. The Church to-day offers no motive which appeals to men and women. The "reward and punishment" doctrine has been dropped without any other having been given in its place. It looks as though the hard-working preachers have temporarily forgotten their first lesson in economics and, as is shown by the growth statistics of all prominent denominations except two, are urging that man should do right "because it is right," *a doctrine which never has secured and never will hold a following.*

The great mass of Protestant and Hebrew churches are at present very inactive compared with former times, although they are doing much good in many ways. Many thoughtful and progressive men of almost every community are no longer identified with church work; while the Labour people seem to distrust all churches. The Sunday services are poorly attended, the mid-week prayer-meetings are almost ignored, the Sunday-schools are not taken seriously; while preachers are very poorly paid.

Of course, there are exceptions in the cases of special churches which temporarily either

26 THE FUTURE OF THE CHURCHES

have a strong man as a preacher or are galvanized by large gifts from certain members. Church workers, however, tell me that city missions, settlement houses and soup kitchens are but artificial stimulants, good for only a limited time; while the "Institutional" church, which was once hailed as the solution of the problem, has signally failed in its purpose. The future of the churches depends not on these artificial efforts. Churches need neither buildings nor gifts in order to be powers in the community. They need a *message*, and this message will be based upon the old and ever powerful fundamental economic theory of reward and punishment.

Do not criticize preachers for placing the soft pedal on certain old theological doctrines. Civilization has outgrown such teaching in the same way that the masses had outgrown the purchasing of indulgences when Luther offered them another doctrine more worth-while. Thus, is it not probably true that the present condition of the churches is due partly to this fact: that "Heaven" as a reward and "Hell" as a punishment have been withdrawn, while no other suitable reward or punishment has been held up in place thereof? *More than this, until some suitable substitute has been found, the churches may continue to lie dormant.*

Therefore, it appears that the future of the

churches probably depends upon finding some other reward to offer and some other punishment to hold up, or upon placing a new and practical interpretation on these two words, such as will appeal to men to-day. Certainly, human nature is the same now as in the days of Jesus, Calvin, Luther, or the old Hebrew prophets; and man's natural desire is still to seek real happiness and avoid disaster. Churches, like other organizations, must work out their salvation along economic lines and rise or fall in power as they utilize or ignore these economic laws.

Churches have a great opportunity; for man has a spiritual side as well as a physical or intellectual. They are far more necessary to an efficient community than the dispensary or school, and preachers are needed by the people much more than are physicians or college professors. Hence, notwithstanding all that has been said, I am a great optimist as to the future of the churches. The churches are lying dormant to-day only preparatory to a great social awakening in which they will lead. Yes, a great religious revival is the greatest need of the world at this very hour.

WHAT THE CHURCH WILL PREACH

As to what this new message of the churches may be, the reports which the Bab-

28 THE FUTURE OF THE CHURCHES

son Statistical Organization is daily receiving from all parts of the world suggest the following: *First, let it be said that these reports show that the only development which can possibly keep democracy afloat is a revival of religion.* Under the old system of centralized government, conditions depended only upon the character of the rulers and not upon the character of the masses. A government could once prosper whatever the conditions of the churches, or even without any educational system for the people; but to-day, with every person a voter and with all votes counting the same, the stability of the government depends not upon wealth nor armies, but upon the character of the electorate. With the "initiative and referendum," the stability of nations depends even more directly upon the character and intelligence of the people as a whole. Before the days of public schools, only a comparative few could read and those who could were trained by the churches to read the best literature. To-day, however, almost every one is able to read.

The love of money on the part of both labour and capital, the enjoyment of special privileges, the effect of tariffs, subsidies, and position, the evil influence of banking interests, the growth of the department store, the decadence of the legal profession and the fact that all of us, good and bad, are judged by

what we have, irrespective of how we got it and what we are doing with it, are undermining the very foundations of the republic. Furthermore, these are only a few of the things which are sure to bring ruin upon us unless we have a revival of religion.

With these facts and past history in mind, it is hoped that before long the churches will break forth with some new message like this: *The survival of our republic depends upon the immediate teaching in the homes and schools, of what is really worth-while, and we must all have the spirit of Jesus in our buying and selling, borrowing and loaning, employing and serving; that is, in all we do, say, and think.* Let the churches again teach the value of home prayers and home training, and let scholars at school be rigidly marked on the fundamentals of character, health and usefulness, and let us parents be fined for our children's shortcomings.

In the same way the churches will some day insist that unless the development of righteousness—in its practical interpretation—immediately becomes the fundamental purpose of home, school, and press, this and other nations (depending upon the rule of the masses) will end in disaster and the clock of civilization be set back several centuries. Here's something practical to hold up as a punishment. As churches once grew by preaching

30 THE FUTURE OF THE CHURCHES

that "the wages of sin is death," so they can again wax strong by holding before the people the dangers of a wrecked republic ruled by atheism and indifference.

But to counterbalance this dismal message of warning (appealing to man's desire to avoid disaster), there will be another message promising reward. The churches will once more break with the vested interests, and again actively work for all truly educational and coöperative movements to equalize opportunity,—such legislation, for instance, as the enactment of revised inheritance laws tending to eliminate legacies so large as to give the recipients more than they need, the money thus received from inheritance taxes being used for vocational continuation schools. In addition to preaching disaster for failing to develop righteousness, the churches will also show the people how much better conditions will be when operating on coöperative principles, consequently attracting through offers of reward those who will not be attracted by fear of disaster. The real Heaven is an upright community on earth where every one has true happiness through the enjoyment of health and service. The true God is that Divine being which is seeking to bring this about.

EACH IN HIS OWN TONGUE

A fire-mist and a planet—
A crystal and a cell—
A jelly-fish and a saurin
And caves where the cave-men dwell;
Then a sense of law and beauty,
And a face turned from the clod—
Some call it Evolution,
And others call it God.

A haze on the far horizon,
The infinite tender sky,
The ripe rich tint of the cornfields,
And the wild geese sailing high—
And all over upland and lowland
The charm of the goldenrod—
Some of us call it Autumn,
And others call it God.

Like tides on a crescent sea-beach
When the moon is new and thin,
Into our hearts come yearnings,
Come welling and surging in—
Come from the mystic ocean
Whose rim no foot has trod—
Some of us call it Longing,
And others call it God.

A picket frozen on duty—
A mother starved for her brood—
Socrates drinking the hemlock—
And Jesus on the road;

32 THE FUTURE OF THE CHURCHES

And millions, who, humble and nameless,
The straight hard pathway plod—
Some call it Consecration,
And others call it God.

—*W. H. Carruth.*

II

Another Point of View

II

ANOTHER POINT OF VIEW

A STUDY of history during the past nineteen centuries¹ shows that our ancestors were originally vassals or slaves of the lord or duke in whose province they were born. Christianity, as distinct from older religions, won the respect and loyalty of these people because it resulted in their throwing off serfdom. The reason why the Roman and other nations so persecuted the Jews was not on account of their theology, *but because their churches elevated the people and provided for them greater opportunities.* In the early days the churches fought for the "under dog" and so long as they did, they prospered and grew mightily, notwithstanding poverty and persecution.

In accordance with the law of action and reaction, these churches gradually became rich until, under Constantine, Christianity became

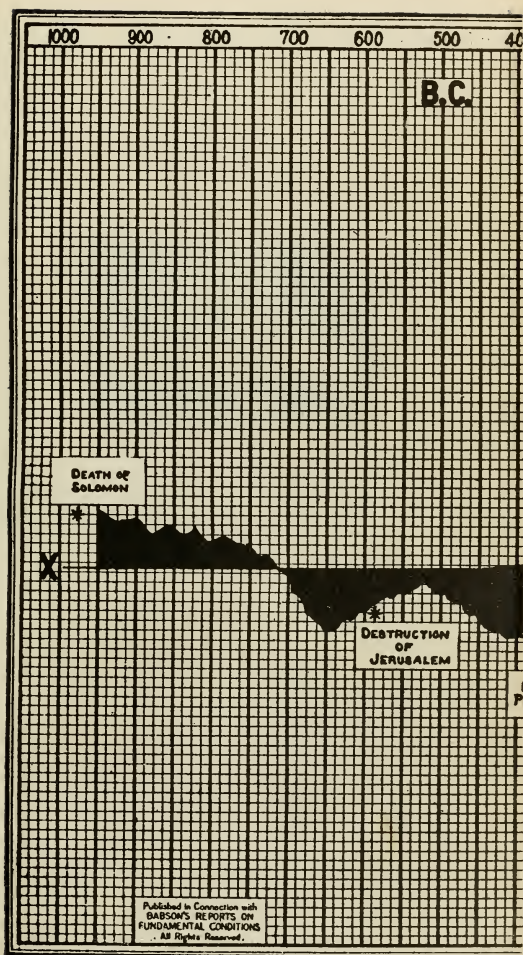
¹ A study of the Jewish Church previous to the coming of Christ shows the same wonderful history and a synopsis thereof is here omitted only because of lack of space.

36 THE FUTURE OF THE CHURCHES

the fashionable religion and the cross was no longer a sign for persecution, but rather became an ornament of fashion. From that time, and for several centuries thereafter, the vital power of Christianity waned until it reached a very low ebb, just preceding the breaking up of the feudal system. Newton's law of action and reaction applies to church history as it does to industry and commerce. This is shown by the accompanying chart.

After our ancestors had cast off serfdom, the land still belonged to the lord or duke who inherited it. It was many centuries after these ancestors ceased being vassals before they were allowed to own land. Discontent, arising from the feudal system, had been gradually growing as the influence of Christianity had been waning, until about the time of the Reformation. What brought about the Reformation? Secular history states that it was a revival of Christianity resulting from the interest which certain churches took in aiding the masses to destroy the economic system of that day.

As the Christian churches of the early centuries got their start by interesting themselves in *breaking up serfdom*, so the Protestant wing was later greatly aided by the interest which a little band of fighting churches took in *breaking up feudalism*. On the other hand, just as the influence of the early Church waned, after



Christianity became popular through the power of Constantine, so the power of the later Protestant wing began to wane when it, in turn, became prosperous and popular.

The third great landmark in church history of the past nineteen centuries came when the common people were granted the privilege of having education and the right to worship God as they desired. In this great movement for freedom of thought, certain churches were a prominent factor, and the influence of such churches increased greatly thereby. On the other hand, after this third step had been taken, these churches again began to rest upon their laurels, and consequently again declined in power and influence.

MODERN CHURCH MOVEMENTS

The next movement came in the seventeenth century, when man reached his fourth step, namely, *the acquiring of political freedom*. In the early centuries, as above stated, serfdom was eliminated through the teachings of the early Christian churches; then in the Middle Ages feudalism was broken up through the influence of a certain group of churches when each family was given the opportunity to own land; next, the right to worship God and study as one pleased was secured through another group of churches, contrary to the wishes of the vested interests of that day; and finally,

38 THE FUTURE OF THE CHURCHES

the churches obtained for the masses political freedom, or the right to rule. Moreover, a study of history shows that this last struggle, wherein the vested interests were stripped of their right to rule, was the most bitter of all, and again, it was the sacrifice of a small body of fighting churches which, in their poverty and under the keenest persecution, brought this about. Thus, this new group came to the forefront, and the churches of to-day owe much to these martyrs. Once again then the law of action and reaction was evident, for as these churches, like their predecessors, became prosperous, their interest in the masses waned and their power correspondingly declined.

NATURE KNOWS NO FAVOURITES

The same thing is true of nations. The race as a whole must prosper and progress in order that any geographical unit of it may flourish at its best. We must lift our brother up in order to make a customer of him. He must be well-governed, in good condition, and fairly thrifty and content, or he becomes a vexatious neighbour and a source of cost and annoyance to us in many ways.

We thus begin to perceive the great fact that nature knows no favourites among the peoples, and that Providence, equally concerned about the sheep in every fold, has so

arranged it that the man or nation that gets ahead must pull up some backward brother after him. It may be that a failure to understand this accounts for the fact that the nations have always heretofore begun to retrograde and have fallen into decadence as soon as a certain stage of culture had been attained. They progressed as far as they could without carrying the rest of humanity with them on the upward path.

As long as Rome gave something of value to every subject people—roads, bridges, laws, literature, and a religion superior to the barbaric faiths it supplanted, her world empire stood and grew. As soon as France had replaced her absolutist dynasty by a government of the people, the task was imposed upon her of sharing with other nations the great and beneficent discovery she had made that the masses of mankind were something more than cattle, vassals of an arrogant ruling caste. As soon as America had made a notable forward step in government which vastly bettered life conditions for the masses, all the world came here to learn about it and enjoy it. We were forced to educate and assimilate them, and as soon as our will and ability to do this had been demonstrated, dependencies devolved upon us and our field of labour was enlarged.

Hence, history shows plainly that when churches or nations have been sacrificing or

40 THE FUTURE OF THE CHURCHES

fighting to bring about more equal opportunity, the people have listened to their doctrine and have respected their leaders. Under these conditions, churches and nations have waxed strong and powerful, however poor or persecuted they may have been. On the other hand, when churches or nations have been prosperous and considered immediate personal gain, and ceased fighting for the equalization of opportunity, then their influence has been comparatively small, even though their numbers were great.

OTHER CHURCHES LIKEWISE

It is true that these pages have treated only of the so-called "Christian" churches, including the great Protestant, Roman Catholic and Greek divisions; but, as heretofore suggested, the same laws applied to the rise and fall of the Jewish Church previous to the split of the first century. It should, moreover, be remembered that civilization fails to recognize the great service which the Jews have rendered along the lines of social progress both before and since this dissension in their ranks. It probably also is true that the various other great religions of the world have a similar history, and the rise and fall of their churches, during the past centuries, has coincided absolutely with whether, for the time being, they have given the people something worth-while

or whether the people have had to fight alone for their freedom and happiness. Hence, the great conflict of the future may not be between Protestants and Roman Catholics, as so many pretend to fear, but may again be between Christians and Mohammedans or between the East and the West. Furthermore, such a conflict might unite these great wings of the Christian Church—Roman, Greek, and Protestant—even with the Hebrew or mother Church itself.

THE QUESTION OF TO-DAY

The world is now in the fifth era of the conflict. Serfdom has been abolished; feudalism has been broken up; freedom of education and worship has been secured; the right of the people to rule has been established; but still there is a great contrast between the opportunities of the children of the rich and the children of the poor.

Many opinions exist as to how this defect can be remedied, and, generally speaking, the thinking people are divided into two groups:

(1) The larger group includes those who are generous and anxious that all shall have a fair chance in life, but in their efforts ignore fundamental economic law such as the law of action and reaction, the law of supply and demand, the law of reward and punishment and other laws which might readily be mentioned.

42 THE FUTURE OF THE CHURCHES

This first group is made up largely of the working classes, but includes many others who style themselves "progressives" or "radicals."

(2) The smaller group—but often the more powerful—includes those who have the proper notions about fundamental economic law, and thus are opposed to government interference with enterprise, but who are determined to retain all the property which they now have and to bequeath fortunes to their children. This group is made up mostly of those who have inherited property, but includes all who style themselves "conservatives" or "capitalists."

Statistics show that each of these two great groups is right on *one* of the two important features of progress, and wrong on the *other*. For instance, the working classes are justified in their desire for further opportunities, but are wholly wrong in their various legislative plans which so entirely ignore the fundamental laws of action and reaction, supply and demand, reward and punishment. Further, the capitalist group is right in its opposition to much of the legislation to-day, but is mistaken in its idea that property is so very sacred and should be given away or bequeathed by the owner to any one he desires.

WHAT THE HEBREWS TAUGHT

No authentic records show the Mosaic land

system or the Jubilee Year was ever observed by the Jews. May not the downfall of the Hebrews have been partly due to their failure so to observe them?

Certainly there were four fundamental principles underlying the Mosaic economy outlined in these Laws for which all the churches in America pretend to stand.

(1) The land was originally distributed by lot, *each family having the same original opportunity so far as legislation could provide it.*

(2) After prescribing a few rules to the game (which rules applied to all alike, the weak and the strong), the fundamental laws of nature, such as the laws of supply and demand, and reward and punishment, were allowed full sway for fifty years. *This encouraged personal ambition and initiative.*

(3) At the end of fifty years, redistribution was provided, debts were cancelled and property that had been bought or sold reverted to its original owners. *This prevented an aristocracy from growing up through inheritance.*

(4) The Church was placed on an economic basis and the people were made to pay for their religious privileges or go without them.

In other words, the Hebrew prophets were apparently exponents of the "*laissez faire*" doctrine for each individual, so far as it applied to his own efforts; but their plan was to prevent one generation from living on the

44 THE FUTURE OF THE CHURCHES

fruits of a previous generation except as all shared the benefits equally.

Of course, in our present state of civilization, it would be impossible to apply this jubilee year principle, although our bankruptcy laws are founded thereon; but the Church could unite with the masses and fight to give them equal hygienic and educational advantages, and to break up aristocracy and abnormal power acquired through inheritance. The masses should not object to how much any man honestly earns nor do they object to inheritances for *protection* purposes, but they do strenuously object to wealth obtained through manipulation, and inheritances which result in *endowing* families.

ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE

The purpose of the churches is not to redistribute property. The purpose of the churches should be rather *to show people how to live*, and to show them that happiness does not come from material things alone. On the other hand, it must be admitted that there are four sides to life: the physical, the intellectual, and the material, as well as the spiritual, and that true progress comes only through the simultaneous development of all four.

Just at the moment, many churches are doing splendid work along certain lines, but are

they accomplishing much toward helping the masses either materially or spiritually? Yet, history plainly shows that for missionary movements to prosper, the people must simultaneously be helped physically, mentally, materially and spiritually. Even Jesus healed the sick, fed the hungry, and continually fought for the masses simultaneously with preaching to them of what is worth-while in life. Therefore, history apparently suggests that the churches will again acquire power and influence only as they become factors in solving the problems of the day. The revived churches, or some new churches springing up, will take hold of the present and fifth great question; namely, *the further equalization of opportunity*, so that, as far as possible, all shall have an equal chance in starting the race of life. Moreover, as the churches remain the defenders of this chance, their influence will be great.

SOME QUESTIONS

Why should churches hesitate in aiding the masses in their struggle? The creeds demand that we should not love the world nor the things that are in the world. Do we members not profess to believe that he who loses his life is greater than he who gains it? Do we not every Sunday even sing hymns of praise suggesting that we care not for food nor raiment,

46 THE FUTURE OF THE CHURCHES

but only for the things eternal? Every student who will carefully read the *teachings* of the churches cannot help being impressed with one thing more than any other; namely, that money is of no account, and the only thing worth-while is service to others!

Of course, the hard-working ministers still preach this doctrine; but they are unable to make converts because the world does not take them seriously. Perhaps we church members hold too tightly to all we have got and are too determined that our children shall have and retain all that we leave! Speaking of children, do we not forget that the masses are more fond of their children than of anything else? It is only natural for them to be jealous when our children inherit goodly sums of money and their children inherit nothing but liabilities.

Therefore it appears that the churches will again become a force in the community and convince men that money is not happiness and wealth is not success, only when they again seriously attempt to equalize opportunity and cease being a party to the mad race for money, show and pleasure. When we begin to seek things worth-while, then the world will take our professions more seriously, but not until then. The churches will prosper only when they back the masses in their movement for more equal opportunities.

FOUR SUGGESTIONS

Moreover, this will not only enable the churches to demand the attention of the world and once more lead people to the things worthwhile; but the reaction upon ourselves as individuals may be beneficial; viz.,

(1) When a larger portion of our property is redistributed through educational and other forms to those who are worthy but unfortunate, which is what the masses are really seeking for to-day, we shall take a greater interest in state affairs and fulfill our duty as citizens.

(2) When our children depend upon their own efforts to succeed, instead of what they inherit from us, then we will give much greater attention to training them—more time to our boys and girls and less time to business and pleasure. Certainly their own efforts will be greater.

(3) When our wives can no longer depend upon the property which we leave, then will the women of the homes demand each year the proportion of our incomes to which they are entitled, or else we will have them reasonably protected by life insurance or in some other practical economic way.

(4) Only by giving young people a certain amount of property as well as votes (and, of course, neither should be given to a young person until he or she has completed a certain course of training) will the masses be made to

48 THE FUTURE OF THE CHURCHES

be conservative or will the rights of property be recognized and protected.

None of the most radical of the masses want rich children to suffer, but rather simply to be dependent on their own resources, as are the children of the great majority. The masses to-day are not asking us to divide with them our property, nor in any way neglect our wives or other worthy dependents, but simply that we arrange things so that, as far as possible, their children will have as fair a chance in the race of life as our children,—and our children as fair a chance as theirs, for certainly too much money is also a curse. This means that the fifth great era will really not be a fight for socialism (which is purely impracticable now to consider), but rather for the breaking up of aristocracy, power and wealth *acquired through inheritance*.

The thinking radicals of to-day are willing to let the “laissez faire” doctrine apply provided it shall apply to all as nearly as possible. They are beginning to realize that nothing is gained through the attempted artificial regulation of wages, prices, rents, or interest. If there is anything which the churches plainly profess and in practice ignore, it is concerning the accumulation of money, but will the churches ever again become powerful until they are consist-

ent on this point and at least aid the masses in eliminating unjust handicaps, and at the same time allow themselves more time and energy for gaining the things worth-while?

CHARITIES

The great mass of people to-day do not want charities. All they want is a "square deal"—as equal a chance as it is possible for them to get, and a reasonable amount of health, faith, education, and material welfare. Most charities insult instead of aid. No self-respecting man of the working classes, whom the churches are seeking to win, ever solicits you or me for money. Most solicitations for charities come to us from our church people themselves for some pet work of their own or of their friends. Moreover, most of us give to these charities simply because we do not wish to offend these friends. We know that present attempts to distribute prosperity through charities are like endeavouring to irrigate the Sahara Desert by carrying water in buckets.

Not only are our charities making only the faintest impression on relieving poverty but if the churches would stop begging continually for money, even they would be much better off. Jesus said, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature;" but He never said "collect money and send others to

50 THE FUTURE OF THE CHURCHES

do it for you." He constantly taught people to give, but you cannot find a single word urging us to collect money of others or to run church fairs and suppers for spreading the gospel.

The gospel on which the churches prosper demands direct *personal* service in the interests of others—not through paid agents—and only as we give this service by training the children in our homes, by helping the employees in our business, by aiding neighbours on our street, and finally, uniting with the masses by working through schools and politics for laws to equalize opportunity, can we hope again to command the respect of the world and interest mankind in the things worth-while.

Before the churches can make people believe in the doctrine that "life is more than meat" and friends more to be desired than gold, must we not, as their representatives, give up something of what we have and cease our continual chase for more?

III

Competitors of the Church

III

COMPETITORS OF THE CHURCH

IN the early days, the Church was about the only institution of the community, and there were only one or two churches in each community. Not only have the churches since been divided and duplicated, but numerous other agencies have come in to compete with the Church. Many of these institutions, such as the Sunday-school, Christian Endeavour societies, Young Peoples' Unions, Epworth Leagues, Young Men's Christian Associations, Young Women's Christian Associations, Evangelical Alliances, Men's Clubs, Laymen's Leagues, Knights of Columbus, and various other organizations are fostered by the Church. Moreover, these organizations are considered by many as beneficial to the Church. Certainly, they are all doing good work and probably are beneficial to the Church. Almost every successful business man, however, will say that he has been successful by concentrating his energies on one institution. Statistics indicate that this policy is the best. If so, it is questionable whether

54 THE FUTURE OF THE CHURCHES

these institutions should be operated separately. A person has only a certain amount of time and energy. If he gives it to an adjunct of the Church, he fails to give it to the Church.

I personally owe more to the Christian Endeavour Society than to any other existing organization. After joining the church at fourteen years of age, I found nothing to interest me until I became interested in the Christian Endeavour movement. This gave me an opportunity for expression in a religious way which held me until I went to college. It truly saved my soul, and I shall always feel deeply grateful to Father Endeavour Clark and all others connected with the movement. On the other hand, if the Church had done its duty by its young people, would there have been any opportunity for the Christian Endeavour movement?

The answer is made that these various societies combine different denominations; that if each denomination attempted to do work simply as a church, the work would all be divided. Of course, so long as the churches are divided, this is very true; but there is no real reason why all groups in the churches could not work together. A study of successful business organizations strongly suggests that the future of the Church demands both fewer denominations and fewer organizations within each de-

nomination with the ultimate goal of eliminating the "organization" idea entirely.

LODGES

The greatest competition which the Church faces to-day is in the various lodges and societies of all kinds and descriptions. The most prominent of these organizations are the Masons, Odd Fellows, Moose, Elks, Knights Templar, etc.; but there are actually thousands of different societies scattered throughout the country. In one New England town there are over ninety of these different organizations and to one of them twenty per cent. of the male adult population belongs. Not a word of criticism should be spoken against these lodges and societies. All of them are doing a tremendous lot of good. Most of them are founded directly on religious principles and operate with a religious ritual. Some of them even insist that their members shall be connected with some church as a requisite to membership in a lodge. The leaders of all these movements refuse to consider their organizations as taking the place of the Church, but always put them second to the Church.

Statistics, however, clearly show that these lodges and societies are competitors of the Church. The very fact that they use a religious ritual makes them almost churches of

themselves. Although one might be considered sacrilegious to say so, yet an impartial analysis would place many of these lodges on a par with many church denominations. Any impartial examination would certainly list some of these great lodges with the church denominations of the country in religious influence. The future of the Church depends upon a consolidation with these lodges. Features of the lodges which appeal to men and women must be adopted by the Church. Certain features of the Church which the lodges now omit must be adopted by the lodges. It is true a man may be a good church member and a good Mason, but he certainly would be more efficient if he put all his energies in one or the other and looked upon all the world as members of that order.

PHILOSOPHIC THOUGHT

Philosophical cults are rapidly growing in influence. India has taken the place of Greece as a teacher of dialectics. A search for ultimate philosophy has inevitably led to some form of monism. As one endeavours to reconcile thought and matter, he is inevitably led to religion in some form. In this way men such as Berkeley, Fichte, Schelling, Hegel, and Boström, all in a way, are religious leaders. They have all consciously or uncon-

sciously founded some sects of believers. Kant, Schopenhauer and Hartmann might be added to this list. The Greeks were the founders of this new thought. The German philosophers next took it up, but a further impetus has recently come from India. The subtle philosophy of Bhagavadgita and Upanishads has found a ready response in America among the followers of Emerson and our other philosophers. -

Orthodox churches look down upon these people, but many of them are honestly seeking the truth, nevertheless. Each church denomination is founded upon some one feature of human nature. The Congregational Church is founded on a desire for freedom; the Baptist Church on a keen theological feeling; the Methodist Church on a desire for organization, and the Christian Science Church on a hunger for physical healing, and so on along the line.

There are a great many intelligent people in the world who hunger for a scientific basis for their religion. None of the established churches offer such a scientific basis. Many of them depreciate any attempt to put religion on a scientific basis. Now these people who are philosophically inclined start organizations of their own, and these naturally become competitors of the established churches. The future of our churches demands that they take a

58 THE FUTURE OF THE CHURCHES

greater interest in philosophy, science and even higher criticism. The Church of the future will welcome the search-light of scientific investigation, philosophical discussions, and thus take in a group which now are drifting away.

ART AND MUSIC

A certain group of people hunger for art and were attracted to the Church in the old days by its art. In Europe the most beautiful structure was the cathedral which towered over the entire community. The finest paintings were in the cathedral and the finest music was to be found at the cathedral. Hence, the mass of people that are so controlled by the love of the beautiful, naturally gravitated to the Church.

When our ancestors, however, came to this country, this feature of the Church was largely discarded. In accordance with the law of action and reaction, the pendulum swung the other way. The old New England churches were built as barren as barns; no paintings were allowed on the walls; plain glass was put in the windows, and the music provided was a disgrace to the church. It is true that the Roman Catholic churches have retained a certain leadership along these lines. The Protestant Episcopal churches of America are building cathedrals and getting back some of

the prestige which they lost in the early days. But many great leaders of the Protestant churches are to-day debating whether the modern church should be on the style of an office building or on the style of a cathedral. Efficiency argues for the former, but psychology argues for the latter. Insufficient statistics make it impossible for one to give a worth-while opinion on this question. It is evident, however, that if churches are to have a brilliant future, they must capitalize art and music in some worth-while and practical way. So long as the theatres and other auditoriums are more beautiful structures, are better decorated and have more attractive music, then the churches will be handicapped.

DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENTS

The Church has not kept in the foreground with the march of democracy. It has not kept up with the development of the labour movement, the enfranchisement of women and the various other social developments of the age. Although all of these things owe their expansion to the Church, and would not exist to-day without the Church, yet the Church has lagged behind in supporting them. The Church has given birth to almost every worth-while movement, but it has not been a very good mother. After giving birth to these movements, it has almost forgotten and discarded them. The

60 THE FUTURE OF THE CHURCHES

child has been somewhat unruly, disobedient and often radical; the child has threatened to leave home and the mother has let it go. This has been a great mistake.

The future of the churches demands that real interest be taken in these public movements. Moreover, the Church has a great opportunity to perform genuine service in this connection. As the pendulum swings between socialism and individualism, the errors of both become more apparent. The demand that we take care of our brothers is no greater or less than that every one render some form of useful service to society. Democracy will never be successful along the lines of either individualism or socialism. Only as all groups become imbued with religion and a happy medium be reached, can democracy survive. The churches are the natural dispensers of this religion and should be the savers of democracy. This—however—was so fully treated in previous chapters, no more need be said about it here.

EDUCATION

The public school system was founded by the Church. The entire educational system of America was started and nursed by the churches. Nearly all of the academies were founded by the churches. Most of the great colleges were organized by church leaders.

Yet the public school system has cast off nearly all of these religious features. In some states reading the Bible and offering the Lord's Prayer as a morning opening exercise has been forbidden. In other states school superintendents are not allowed to ask prospective teachers whether or not they believe in the Divine Being. Our high schools have become hotbeds of carelessness and indifference. Our colleges which were founded by the churches have almost forgotten their original purpose. Most of these educational forces are pulling away from the Church instead of up-building the Church as they were created to do.

Next to religion and good health, education is the most important thing; but it should be kept in its third place and not be allowed to get into first place. It can never hold first place; to put education ahead of spiritual and physical well-being means disaster. The future of the churches depends not only in getting back their position as spiritual leaders, but also as educational leaders. Moreover, the future of the churches demands that more education be put into religion and more religion be put into education. The two must be drawn more closely together, rather than be allowed to drift further apart.

The churches must get behind scientific investigation of all kinds. The churches must

62 THE FUTURE OF THE CHURCHES

uphold the work of Copernicus and Galileo, Newton and Laplace, Lyell and Agassiz, Faraday and Helmholtz, Linnæus and de Candolle, Schleiden and Bichat, Lamarck and Darwin. The names of these men should be put on the walls of the churches along with such names as Knox and Wesley, Edwards and Finney, Channing and Parker, Maurice and Robertson, Moody and Spurgeon, Beecher and Brooks.

RELIGION FUNDAMENTAL

What does this all mean? To a statistician it means that a church should give attention to reforming itself as well as to reforming the world. The churches need self-analysis, reorganization, efficiency experts and such other treatment as an unprofitable corporation receives. Questionnaires should be sent out to business men in all localities. These questionnaires should be carefully prepared and the answers intelligently compiled. Conventions should be held, not for the present customary purposes, but to consider the future of the churches in an honest, businesslike manner. The church leaders need the spirit of the scientist and of the physician to fearlessly diagnose the situation and honestly render an impartial report.

The churches are continually soliciting their members for funds to spread the gospel; but

what gospel are they spreading? Many denominations are in the position of a factory where all the employees are listed as salesmen with no one manufacturing the product, and with the salesmen themselves exceedingly inefficient, devoting only one or two hours a week to their work. The churches have a wonderful product, a product which is the most needed of any product in the world to-day. The future of the churches is unlimited, but its product must be standardized and brought up to date.

Religion might be compared to a wheel. The man who invented the wheel provided civilization with a great fundamental thing. The wheel was first used on chariots, then on wagons, then on stage coaches, later on locomotives, and finally to-day it is the basis of the automobile. The same wheel is on the automobile as was on the chariot centuries ago, but it has been adapted to new uses as one generation has followed another.

The teachings of Jesus are as fundamental to-day as is the wheel; but the churches are still in the chariot or the stage-coach era. The locomotive and automobile era has not yet reached the churches, or rather they insist on selling the stage coaches when the demand is for automobiles. Let the Church cling to the fundamental principles of religion as the mechanic has clung to the fundamental principles

64 THE FUTURE OF THE CHURCHES

of the wheel. The churches should, however, adapt this fundamental religion to modern conditions as the mechanic has adapted to modern conditions the fundamental principle of the wheel.

PROPOSED QUESTIONNAIRE

Any questionnaire to be used by the Church for an analysis should be prepared by a large group of leaders with the utmost care, but as an offhand suggestion of what might appeal to the business man, the following may be of interest:

The Church

1. Are you a church member? What denomination? How regularly do you attend?
2. In your opinion is the Church *gaining* or *losing* power, and why?
3. Do you think the Church is losing its hold on *men*? If so, what is the reason?
4. Why do not all men who profess the Church is good and necessary for the community support it?
5. Is a man doing his duty toward his community without joining or attending a church?
6. What would increase the efficiency of the Church and strengthen its hold upon men?
7. What criticism have you to make on the pulpit, or the preaching of to-day?

8. What, in your opinion, would increase the efficiency of the pulpit and the preaching and give preachers a more winning appeal to men?

9. Do "suppers," "fairs," and other entertainments carried on by the Church help or harm it?

10. How could the Church raise more money in order to have more to spend on its preaching and other work?

Prayer-meetings, Etc.

1. Do you know anything personally about prayer-meetings? Do you go to them?

2. How many men go to prayer-meetings, usually, in your church? How many women? How many young people?

3. Will the prayer-meeting continue or probably die out?

4. What could take its place?

5. What do you think of church music as it exists to-day?

6. Will this be developed more or less as time goes on?

7. What is your opinion as to young people's societies?

8. Should the Y. M. C. A. put more or less time on religious evangelistic work?

9. Do you believe in religious revivals?

10. Were you ever "converted"?

66 THE FUTURE OF THE CHURCHES

Boys and Young Men

1. What percentage of the young men between the ages of sixteen and twenty-one in your community are regular attendants at the Sunday-school?

2. What percentage of the young women?

3. Why aren't the balance in the church or Sunday-school?

4. Is there anything in the Sunday-school or church especially calculated to interest or appeal to young men of that age which they do not get as well or better outside? If so, what is it?

5. Has the Sunday-school or church with which you are best acquainted planned any particular work for young men of that age that is really worth while? If so, what is it?

6. Do you feel that you owe much to the Sunday-school of your youth?

7. Judging from past experience, are they likely to stay on in the Sunday-school and church after they get to be four or five years older?

8. Do the men of the church care anything about keeping the boys in the church? Do they pay much attention to the matter?

9. Are the men making any businesslike effort to interest the boys and keep them in the church? What do they do?

10. What percentage of the men of your church are in the Sunday-school?

Personal Questions

1. In this new age, with its hurry and its cares, what has become of the old question: "Will you give your heart to Jesus?"

2. How do you think others would answer this question to-day?

- (a) School children.
- (b) College students.
- (c) Business men.
- (d) Business women.
- (e) Fathers.
- (f) Mothers.

3. How would you answer for yourself the question,—“Am I my brother’s keeper?” and with what reasons or arguments would you support your answer?

4. Is it possible to apply the Golden Rule, literally and fully, in your home? Explain reasons.

5. Is the difficulty with the Golden Rule or with your environment?

6. Could you practice the Golden Rule if you were in some other home?

7. Give your ideas about Faith.

8. Has it real power to “move mountains”?

9. Has it power to heal disease?

10. Do you consider “prayer” and “faith” the same?

68 THE FUTURE OF THE CHURCHES

Business Questions

1. State your business and whether or not the following Bible teachings are practical.

- (a) "Bless them which *persecute* you."
- (b) "Recompense no man evil for evil."
- (c) "Provide things honest in the sight of all men."
- (d) "Judge not that ye be not judged."
- (e) "If thine *enemy* hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink."
- (f) "Be not overcome of evil but overcome evil with good."

2. Could not modern business be conducted in strict accordance with those commands?

3. What would happen to a merchant, or a manufacturer, or a corporation who should actually apply those rules in their business operations?

5. Did you ever know of any one's doing it? If so, what was the result?

6. What is the greatest need of business to-day?

7. What would happen to you and your business if you practiced the Sermon on the Mount?

8. How would such a practice affect your employees? Your family? Your neighbours?

9. What could the Golden Rule do for Washington, D. C.?

10. For world peace?

Questions on Prayer

1. When, where and how often do you pray?
2. Do you get anything out of prayer? What?
3. What do you pray about?
4. Do you pray in particular about your business or profession?
5. Do you pray with others? Your wife? Your children? Your business associates?
6. Does it seem to do your business or your profession any good? Give an example, if possible, showing what effect it has had upon your affairs.
7. Have you ever tried to settle a labour dispute by praying with your men? Or any other misunderstanding by praying with the party with whom you are at odds?
8. If you *don't* pray, do you ever wish you did? In that case can you give any reason for not praying?
9. In general, from your own experience, and from your observations of others, what should you say prayer is good for?
10. Can you give any personal instances of definite answers to prayer?

IV

Teachings of Jesus

IV.

TEACHINGS OF JESUS

WHAT are the fundamental teachings of Jesus? Briefly Jesus taught that men and women fail to live truly, and really amount to nothing unless they have spirituality. The spiritual force underlies everything and without it nothing worth while can be accomplished. The old religions gave the *letter* of the law, but it remained for Jesus to emphasize the *spirit* of the law. Yet, spiritual needs can be met only by spiritual means. All government laws, methods and organizations are of no value unless men and women are filled with truth, righteousness and mercy. Material things have no power to raise the sunken spirit. Gravitation, electricity and steam are great forces, but they are all powerless to change the motives of men and women. The wealth of a Rockefeller cannot heal a broken heart and the wisdom of all our universities cannot turn into the paths of righteousness a wayward soul. Men can be born again only through religion. To make men over is the real purpose and function of the churches.

74 THE FUTURE OF THE CHURCHES

Jesus did not pose as a statesman, a professor of learning, or even as a philosopher. He probably never heard of astronomy, geology, history, literature, chemistry or physics; but He possessed those essential qualities for success in every line of work. He understood the emotions, He realized that the world is ruled by feelings and not by figures. He was an independent thinker with confidence in His own judgment, having love for the truth and yet a gentleness and meekness in seeking and presenting it. No student can read the words of Jesus without being impressed with His integrity, independence and sincerity. Yet He was meekness personified, always seeking the truth, endeavouring to help others, without forcing upon them His own wishes and ideas. He possessed mental freedom and loyalty to conviction and yet was humble in His own influence and shunned rather than sought notoriety.

ACTION AND REACTION

The basis of Jesus' teachings seems to be the law of action and reaction or what Emerson called "The Law of Compensation." He urged men to forgive in order that they may be forgiven; to give in order that they may be given unto; and to sow in order that they may reap.

Once more the writer suggests that the fu-

ture of the churches depends on emphasizing more this fundamental law of action and reaction. Already some of the organizations outside of the churches have adopted it. The Rotary Clubs have, for instance, for their motto "He profits most who serves best." The churches in uniting upon the leadership of Jesus must emphasize this fundamental law of compensation.

If a reader puts down this book with only one idea impressed upon him, may that idea be the one treated in the first two chapters. Jesus never preached altruism nor materialism; He never taught that the end justifies the means; but He did hold up reward and punishment as reasons for the faith we should possess.

SOCIAL PROBLEMS

From the beginnings of the world there has been a conflict between those who have and those who have not. It first was a conflict between man and beast, then a brutal conflict between man and man. Gradually the brutality has been eliminated and men have used tools, pens and money instead of their fists and teeth, but the conflict still rages. Many Utopias have been offered as a solution of the conflict. Statistics teach that all of these Utopias when tried, with one exception, have failed. This exception is the teachings of the Sermon

76 THE FUTURE OF THE CHURCHES

on the Mount. This Sermon does not attempt to give a complete program of social reform or business relationship. It does lay down, however, startling and revolutionary principles. Jesus taught that men should love their enemies, do good to those who abuse them, refrain from all retaliation and overcome evil with good. Nearly all leaders in industry and commerce admit that an adoption of these principles would eliminate a great portion of the troubles of to-day and altogether abolish war.

Yet, none of the church denominations excepting the Quakers accept these teachings of Jesus in their literal sense. Even the descendants of the Quakers are gradually falling away from the doctrines of their fathers, although retaining their membership in Quaker churches. The future of the churches depends on adopting the Quaker principles and upon capitalizing these great psychological powers which Jesus offers. As cannibalism, slavery and other evils have been eliminated, so war, labour troubles and present difficulties could largely be wiped away. Although it is human nature to punish and abuse our enemies, statistics show very clearly that nothing is gained in this way. Instead of winning them over to our ideas, which is the real object sought, we simply make them more bitter and defeat the very purpose that we have in mind. Instead

of Jesus' teachings being impractical, they are intensely practical.

JUDGE NOT

Another of Jesus' teachings which it is very difficult for the churches to adopt to-day is His command that we should not judge others. With His great knowledge, He understood how impossible it is for any man or woman to gain a knowledge of the workings of another's mind. He also knew that where a man is governed so largely by feelings and so little by intellect, it is almost impossible to pass disinterested, sympathetic and impartial judgment.

Jesus understood the tremendous power of heredity and environment, the complexity of human motives leading up to acts and words, and the impossibility of men's analyzing and determining these influences. Already the scientist realizes the difficulty of judging, and the wisdom of Jesus' meaning. The future of the churches depends upon carving these words "Judge not" over their doors and making it a requirement for membership in good standing.

Jesus supplied this principle not only to business and religious questions, but also to the great social sex problems. Although Jesus urged men to live a life of extreme purity—in thought as well as in deed—yet when the

78 THE FUTURE OF THE CHURCHES

woman taken in adultery was brought to Him and the popularists began to punish her, He drove them away, and turning said to her: "Neither do I condemn thee." In this, the Church may wisely follow His example.

SERVICE

Jesus, however, did not present a passive religion. He did not advise sitting in a house by the side of the road and letting the world go by. Although He told us to overcome evil with good and judge not, yet He urged us on to service. He laid down the principle that men should live together, not exercising authority over one another, but as brothers, rendering service one to another. He taught that greatness consisted not in power to rule over man, but rather in power to serve men. This is a message which to-day is needed by both the rich and the poor, by both the employer and his wage worker.

In these days when democracy is being preached, it is most essential that the Church should stand with the masses in their demand for equal opportunities, but the Church should emphasize to the masses that they are here to serve and that they should think more of their duties and less of their so-called "rights." Only religion can prevent democratic rule from developing into mob rule. Autocracy of

votes may be even more dangerous than an autocracy of kings or of wealth. A nation can prosper only as its citizens are religious, intelligent, capable of service and eager to render it.

The future of the churches requires that the word "service" shall be emphasized more and more. Theology, forms of worship and other things are of little importance compared with the spirit of service. The churches must make clear that only those who serve are worthy members of the Church and that this service must be broad enough to include one's business and financial transactions.

Jesus' statement "Swear not at all," has been interpreted by the Church as meaning merely the using of God's name in vain. Bible students, however, insist that Jesus' meaning was very much broader and that He opposed the taking of oaths in any form. Yet, even to-day, the oath is used for the witness in court, for the soldier who joins the army, for the clerk who enters the employ of the government; yea, and for even the theologian who enters the work of the ministry. Here again the Quakers and the early Baptists understood this broader teaching. Thoughtful men at the present time look upon the oath as a thing very inconsistent for society. The time will come when our children will look back with shame and amazement at the way we have

80 THE FUTURE OF THE CHURCHES

used the oath in making people promise to obey and uphold laws and rulings, irrespective of whether they are right or wrong.

POSITION OF WEALTH

One of the greatest problems which the Church has been obliged to face is the problem of wealth. Money has certainly been the bottom of the churches' evils. The poor churches have not had enough of it and the well-to-do churches have had too much of it. Money has been the trial of almost every minister, both in connection with his personal affairs and in connection with his parishioners. His troubles have not been with those in medium circumstances, but with the poor who are in distress and with the rich who attempt to dictate his policy.

Jesus did not give specific instructions as to the relation of capital and labour, the freedom or restraint of trade, principles or methods of taxation, or other modern financial problems. He realized that each age must grapple with its own difficulties. Jesus, however, did clearly understand the effect of wealth and of poverty on the character of men and women. He further understood the benefit to character of the practice of sharing with others. Furthermore, He was the first to realize the effect of worry upon one's personal health and efficiency. Hence, without any definite com-

ments, He presented to the people the foolishness and dangers of laying up for oneself treasures on earth. He even appealed to man's immediate interests in urging the fruitlessness of pursuing wealth, power and fame.

Jesus did not urge the life of a monk, nor did He want us to dress in sackcloth and live on the herbs. God made the beautiful sunset, the birds to sing, the colour of the flowers and the fragrance of the woods. The greatest artists in all their power have sought only to approach the beauties and the wealth of Nature. Jesus said nothing against wealth as such, but He objected very strongly to the existing contrasts between the rich and the poor. He was interested in raising the level of the entire mass. He had rather have all millionaires than only a few millionaires. The future of the churches depends upon each taking a similar and sane view on this question of wealth, urging the poor to wake up and the rich to give up. Except as the entire community enjoys wealth, the Church must emphasize that it is a source of great danger.

The Church must make clear two things: first, that in proportion as one seeks wealth he becomes forgetful of justice, mercy and regard for the rights, liberties and welfare of others; and secondly, that mere wealth does not give that peace of mind which is the greatest joy in life. This peace of mind can be se-

82 THE FUTURE OF THE CHURCHES

cured only by one seeking truth, goodness, simplicity, uprightness and service.

Jesus deprecated on every occasion man's constant anxiety for the morrow. He saw men dwarfed and marred by needless daily cares. Hence, He pointed to the birds in the wood and the flowers in the field, saying if God will take care of these helpless things, what right have human beings to worry? Yet, economics teach that our livelihood depends far less on our own exertions than upon the good-will of our fellows and the bounty of Nature. We fail to see that just in proportion as we seek the Kingdom of Heaven, our own needs as individuals are met. The Church must emphasize these great fundamental economic principles and bring about that Kingdom of Heaven for which we all, rich and poor, unconsciously hunger.

FORMS OF WORSHIP

The writer perhaps should not criticize the Church for its various forms and practices. These are questions which should be determined more by the Bible students than by the statistician. He cannot help feeling, however, that Jesus would be very much surprised to go into the average church and see the forms and ceremonies being carried on in His name. Were He to analyze some of the songs that

we sing in our churches, He certainly would be astonished at our hypocrisy or ignorance.

Jesus seemed to have little interest in popular religious customs. He strongly condemned *public* prayers, *public* almsgiving, and fasts. He cared nothing for formal sacrifices, the conventional observance of the Sabbath and various other church forms. He never ordained the use of either oaths or force in the interests of religion. He even freely criticized the Scriptures, rejecting what seemed to Him bad. Jesus declined to be known as a Messiah, or the King of Israel, and many believe that He would most seriously object to being called by us the Christ. He resisted all opportunities to rule over the Jews. His ambition was not to rule but to serve.

Jesus was not interested in theology. His one interest seemed to be to bring on earth the Kingdom of Heaven, the perfecting of human society and the establishing of human brotherhood. He next was interested in eternal life, a life which should begin in this world and continue its influence or existence forever. Jesus clearly believed in eternal life, but what form He never explained. Certainly, He cannot be blamed for the Nicene or other disputed creeds.

Jesus certainly would be interested in missions because to Him all men are brothers, whether Americans or English, French or

84 THE FUTURE OF THE CHURCHES

Germans, Japanese or Hindoo. He was interested in preaching the gospel throughout all the earth and made this one of the chief duties of His disciples. On the other hand, it is hard to imagine Jesus endeavouring to win the affections of these older people away from prophets and religious leaders that they have been taught to love. Hence, would Jesus attempt to wipe out Brahmanism, Buddhism and Mohammedanism or would He rather leave these religions in their names but reform them along better lines?

These, however, are questions not for a layman to discuss. The writer mentions them only with the idea of suggesting reasons why the Church is gradually losing its relative power and how the Church may quickly regain that power and become the all-powerful influence for progress. Certainly Jesus has shown us the way. We need only to pull away the fences and rubbish, the decorations and the forms, under which His teachings have been buried.

V

A Possibility

V

A POSSIBILITY

NOTWITHSTANDING the inconsistent attitude which the churches now take toward these teachings, one should be very optimistic as to their future. Although the churches are now ridiculed by many thinking people and have lost the confidence of the great mass of working people, nevertheless, their future is bright. At various other stages in the world's history, they have reached the low ebb which exists to-day. In fact, as stated, the history of the churches has been a series of ups-and-downs, which, if plotted, would correspond very closely to the great swings in financial, commercial, and social development.

Its fluctuations are not short, like those of the Babsonchart, each extending over only a few years. The great swings in church activity and recession are over much longer periods and are closely allied to the great forward movements in civilization, as explained in a previous chapter. More than this, these

88 THE FUTURE OF THE CHURCHES

long swings have followed economic rather than theological lines. When the churches have interested themselves in practical questions as suggested in the proposed Questionnaire, they have prospered; but when they have not been so interested, they have declined. Hence the economic interpretations of history, combined with the careful study of church progress, convinces one that the next church movement will be along distinctly economic lines, especially relating to the application of religion to every-day life.

Of course there are many who claim that Christianity demands the institution of state socialism, and some feel that it can be practiced only through communism or collectivism; but it does not now call for anything of the kind. Although Christianity demands that our every deed, word, and thought should be in the interests of the community as a whole and not for our exclusive benefit, yet a study of Jesus' teachings shows most clearly that He stood for individual responsibility and apparently had little hope of solving the world's problems through legislation or the enforcement of law.

His idea apparently was that when men should develop the right spirit with the passionate desire to serve the community, proper legislation would unconsciously be enacted and readily be enforced; but until such time, no

amount of legislation would bring about the desired result. The history of the Jewish nation during the centuries of its existence was absolute proof that unless men have the spirit of service, the most elaborate legislative program is of no avail.

CHURCHES AND CAPITALISM

Of all questions facing the Church, the question of "Capitalism" may some day rent the Church in twain. If it is wise to encourage people to accumulate money in amounts large enough to become capitalists, then the interest system is right. Surely, one is as entitled to a wage for saving as for any other worthy endeavour. But there is a grave question whether the Christian religion favours the manipulation of money. Many feel that it was not the payment and receipt of interest which the Scripture seems to forbid, but rather the unequal accumulations of wealth. The references to "usury" were simply incidental to the bigger question of riches, and their dangers.

It had always been understood in early Christian times that "usury," the common term, was prohibited by Scripture. But as the Church was called upon to pronounce formal decision, it proceeded to modify the Scriptural prohibition to meet the growing requirements of the world. It was decided that a

lender might share in the profits of any enterprise in which his money was used, but he could not bargain himself out of risks nor out of responsibility.

This opened the way for many devices to secure compensation for loans. Shylock's case was evidently of this class; his suit was for a pound of flesh under his contract. The new life in Europe that came on with the Protestant Reformation in the sixteenth century had immediate effect in the business world. Geneva then was a chief commercial city. With the advent of John Calvin, and the revolution which established the independence of the city and a new form of popular government, a new adjustment of business became inevitable. The syndics put up to Calvin the crucial question. It was a matter of conscience with many, and more or less of necessity with all. They wanted an authoritative ruling as to usury.

CALVIN'S DECISION

This led to a new study of the Bible, which the great reformer proceeded to make. He soon discovered that, while usury was clearly forbidden in some passages of the Scripture, there were others in which, in different circumstances, it was allowed. He thereupon ruled that it was not a transaction unlawful in itself. There are circumstances in which in-

terest on money loaned can properly be demanded and paid. But he prescribed that it must be loaned only at a reasonable rate and when the loan was for the promoting of the general good. Certainly this last was a wise banking principle.

This at once became the accepted practice in Geneva. Calvin's disciples carried it home with them; John Knox took it to Scotland and there applied it throughout the State, so that Scotland was the earliest country to adopt in business the free use of capital wherever it could be obtained. In the century from Elizabeth to Cromwell, with which the new life of England began, the ruling of Calvin had great effect. The burden upon the conscience of honest merchants under the old ecclesiastical law was swept away. Opportunity was given for investing in those commercial enterprises which were possible only when capital could be employed.

There were large areas of tillable land in England which had never been brought under cultivation, and there was a mass of unemployed labour flowing about the country as the result of the relaxing of the old laws that bound the labourer to the soil. Money could now be profitably borrowed for the opening of the land and the employment of labour. Capital was gathered for this and for other enterprises; and the new era of business ac-

92 THE FUTURE OF THE CHURCHES

tivity in all directions which quickly enriched England, and has been since characteristic of that country, was inaugurated.

The ruling of Calvin was a commercial and monetary emancipation, but in amending the early decrees of the Church, it stopped short of continuing and enforcing the old law of responsibility of the lender for the use to which his money should be put. That has not been done to this day, and there remains need of modern church ruling in that direction.

It is curious to note that it was the decision of the Church on the lips of a spiritual leader, as a result of Biblical study, which loosened the fastenings of a door which stood in the way of a great commercial movement. It was like the starting of the lock in the Panama Canal, which might be conceived as opening the way for the rushing of the tides of an ocean in a direction hitherto closed. It is often supposed that barriers cannot long be maintained against the tide of man's devices, particularly those which are directed to secure him truly greater ultimate gain. Through sixteen hundred years the restriction which had maintained among the Jews served against the free development of the opportunities which came to the wider world. Then suddenly the restrictions were loosened and rapidly the whole flow of modern commercial and industrial life began.

AN UNCOMPLETED RESPONSIBILITY

As is usual with such tremendous movements, so charged as they are with vitality, inevitable evils were still unrecognized. The work of the following era, from the seventeenth century to to-day, and which is yet far from complete, has been to guide and control that movement. The law books are full of legislation, made and unmade from time to time as necessity became manifestly great. To protect individual rights, laws against combination were passed and sharply enforced. With their relaxing, a new era arose, only again to discover the need of the anti-capitalistic legislation with which we are now struggling, under a necessity which has become apparent, but with difficulties with which we have by no means learned wisely to deal.

Money has come to be recognized as an implement indispensable in any enterprise, and for which proper compensation may be justly demanded. But the use to which borrowed money may be put is regarded as a matter wholly outside the province of the lender, except so far as he is concerned with his security. In this respect, at least, the practice of the Middle Ages was, from an ethical standpoint, ahead of that of to-day. That the question is far from being settled, appears from time to time in regard to money given for philanthropic or religious enterprises, where the

94 THE FUTURE OF THE CHURCHES

public challenge the propriety of accepting money which may have been made by questionable methods. Certainly the churches should not uphold the feeling of the classical Greeks, that "gold has no smell," and therefore it is not necessary to investigate its origin.

One form of responsibility was maintained for a long time, namely, the financial liability of stockholders as of partners in commercial enterprises. This was until recently the general practice. It served to give credit when credit was the chief need, but it involved terrible loss and widespread disaster, as in the historic case of the Glasgow Bank. The modern device of limited liability in corporations has largely done away with this feature. The old question may, therefore, be regarded as still open, as to what extent the personal responsibility of the lender goes with his loan or investment. Certainly this is a question for the churches, though it is an entirely open question generally in law. The new sense of larger responsibility, the beginnings of which already are so widely felt, and which were coming into serious consideration in thoughtful minds in connection with the opening of the Orient, will inevitably be found more pressing when the business world faces the coming new opportunities and the new responsibilities. There will be inevitably a new

realization of human brotherhood, as the nations will come together in ways that the world has hitherto never experienced.

Under such circumstances, credit, upon which all business must eventually rest, will turn in far larger measure than in the past upon personal confidence and character. It may be, therefore, that the acceptance of responsibility of this kind will come about as the voluntary act of the churches rather than by any enforcement of law, which will be a far healthier method. In any case, the churches can be a foundation stone in the structure of the new commercial world. They can have weight, and be recognized, like the decision in Geneva in the seventeenth century, only as their teachings are founded on the precepts of Jesus.

ONE SUGGESTION

There must be a happy medium between the position of the socialists and the distinctly reactionary attitude which the churches assume to-day. As a matter of interest this "happy medium" will be hinted at.

Instead of the followers of churches holding property in common, turning over their actual profits for the benefit of the community as did those of the early Church, there may be a mutual turning in of information, facts, and other personal records of earnings and expend-

itures. There may be no secrets among such persons, but each may know the receipts, expenses, and the actual property holdings of all others.

Personally, the writer believes that with religion, education, and just inheritance laws, *publicity* is the only remaining motive power which can be used to solve our nation's problems. To clean the banking system, the publicity of bank loans may be a necessity; to eliminate the trust evil, the publicity of profits, contracts, and all other details of large corporations may be inevitable; to solve the wage problem, the posting of wages and earnings may come; while taxation will probably be justly assessed only when the personal business of every citizen is public property.

Publicity is the very important cure for the hundreds of evils which beset this and other nations, although such publicity must be coupled with the development of religion and education. Hence, to the hundreds of societies and organizations existing for various kinds of welfare and other work, it may be said that the best opportunity for the furthering of any of these causes comes through *publicity legislation*. Moreover, in this the churches may some day lead.

If the day is coming when religion demands that we all turn in a list of all our property, the sources of our income together with our

expenditures, such a movement should cement society together with the loyalty and brotherly interest impossible in any other way. One effect of such a plan should be the elimination of unfair competition among church people.

Competition is not only natural but useful in the development of civilization, but *unfair* competition is both wasteful and wrong, economically and morally. The only assurance that one person will give another a square deal will probably come through the insistence that the profits, losses and other so-called personal business of each are the common knowledge of all. Many of the present misunderstandings between men would then soon be eliminated. At any rate, publicity is the first step in the elimination of such misunderstandings.

WINNING THE WORKERS

The payment of proper wages to employees will be worked out along some such line as this, rather than through so-called minimum wage legislation, which later is bound to react either in throwing many out of employment or in raising prices. When the wages paid and received by the churchmen of any community are recorded and posted for the benefit of the entire membership (which membership would include both employers and employees)

together with a statement as to the employer's profits, the very troublesome labour question might rapidly solve itself in such a community. When the churchmen who operate stores mark their goods with the cost prices as well as the selling prices, people will begin to take notice.

No workman ever begrudged a real producer the profits of his labour even though those profits should run into the millions; but the man who is becoming wealthy through the exploitation of others naturally is subject to suspicion. Therefore, perhaps the only way that employers in general and labour in general can come together is for each to put its cards on the table and let them be seen by the other. As labour is now compelled to do it, the next step is for the employer to do likewise. Perhaps the churches will lead in such a movement.

SOLVING CHURCH FINANCES

Such a system of mutual interchange of information among fellow church members would, of course, at once solve the problems of financing the churches and their allied organizations. When each Christian turns in a list of his property holdings and income, it will be necessary only for the church to decide on the budget which it needs and make an assessment as do the tax authorities in the

most progressive states. In this case, each member would pay the same proportion of his income, and any reasonable amount could be raised quickly and in a dignified manner.

This would mean that preachers could be paid a living wage, thus attracting stronger men into the ministry; that the Sunday-school could be made efficient through the employment of experienced teachers, and that the churches could become a real factor in the social development of the community through the employment of experts along desired lines.

POOLING CHARITIES

Some feel that if this step is ever taken it would result in church people pooling their welfare work and using the church as a clearing house for all worth-while objects. Of course, this would immediately put the churches in a most important economic position, enabling them to command the respect of all organizations. Perhaps this is the solution of such problems as relate to city planning, model tenements, industrial education, public hygiene, vocational guidance, supervised playgrounds, and many of the other splendid works which are now only feebly developed. Certainly, if after pooling our gifts, we should likewise pool our votes, the churches surely would immediately regain their place in the

community. When one realizes that organized labour has obtained its tremendous power in legislation through a combination of less than five per cent. of the people, the tremendous force which the churches may some day exercise in the democracy, through the pooling of interests, readily becomes apparent.

There are, of course, hundreds of good things which the churches should do which they are not doing. Almost every thinking man has a different or a new suggestion. With nearly all of these the writer agrees in the broad sense. The question arises, however, whether most suggestions are not results and effects rather than fundamentals. With the right motive coupled with knowledge, every question rapidly solves itself. Therefore, does not the future of the churches depend on the *development of the right motive*—that is, the spirit of service based upon a real knowledge of actual conditions, which can come only through the adoption of mutual publicity as above outlined?

For this reason should not some day the church people of every community act together and frankly acknowledge one another as brothers, each giving the others a complete knowledge of his property holdings, income, expenses, wages, and savings; and saying to the others, "Now what shall I do?" Only as each of us so gets this spirit and frankly

shows his position and honestly asks, "What shall I do?" shall we ever do anything really worth-while.

POSSIBLE REFORMS

Briefly, the churches will not regain their power in the community until their followers cease being so indifferent and inconsistent. To those of us who are members and actively interested in some church does not this mean:

First,—we should recognize that churches are no more divine institutions than are colleges, hospitals, farms, or even many factories. Either all worth-while organizations are divine, or else none are. All must stand upon their own merits. Much harm has been done by the furtherance of the false idea that churches are not subject to the same economic laws as are other institutions. Hence the first step is for us frankly and fearlessly to recognize that churches are subject to economic laws.

Second,—we should make sure that the churches give the people a real equivalent for the time and money which the churches demand. The idea that men and women should go to church to support the churches is as unsound as to expect people to get sick to support the hospitals. A study of the situation has convinced me that many communities exist where conditions would be better off if the

citizens refrained from supporting certain of the churches until these churches forget certain theological differences and unite in one strong community church with a well-educated and well-paid minister commanding the respect of the people. Much harm is being done by well-meaning people in their attempts to keep alive certain churches which are not producing enough fruit to warrant their existence. The community would be far better were this money given to other churches which are rendering good service.

Third,—we should be very careful how we preach altruism. The theory underlying the Golden Rule is sound, but the idea that men should do right “for right’s sake” is unsound. The doctrine of overcoming evil with good has a scientific basis, and should be taught; but the churches should frankly state that the only reason for using this method of treatment is because it is more effective. Instead of teaching an unnatural altruism, churches should fearlessly recognize that every man is justified in seeking happiness and avoiding pain. The most that can be done for people is to show them how their well-being is dependent upon that of their neighbours.

The time is coming when we will not consider chiefly the interest which our investments yield for a given security, but whether the money is to be used to sewer a city or to

build a fashionable apartment house in New York.

Fourth,—We should get away from the idea that the Church is an organization or club existent for its “members.” This “exclusive” feature and the Church’s dependence upon wealth has been its greatest handicap. Jesus never intended to *organize* anything. His idea was simply to drop a few “mustard seeds” or “leaven the loaf.” Christianity is essentially unorganized. When we organize it we destroy its chief charm. Organization, authority, force and money should be shunned by the Church. Furthermore, the Church should emphasize *faith* rather than *belief*, and appeal to the *heart* rather than the *head*.

Frank Crane has well stated this in his “Immoralities of the Church”:

“It has always seemed to me that the right attitude of church people should be expressed thus: I am happy. I have a peace that passeth understanding. I have found the open secret, so that worry does not beset me, circumstances cannot defeat me, tragedy becomes triumph, and death spells hope and not despair. Do you suppose, if any band of people talked like that, and so lived that you could see they were telling the simple truth, that all the world would not want to be like them? They would have to hire police to keep the crowds back.”

THE FAMILY SPIRIT HOLDS THE SOLUTION

As employers of labour and as employees, we have a great opportunity. The great industrial struggle of to-day will never be settled through strikes, arbitration, or any other artificial means. The solution rests with those of us who profess to have a religion and practice it, whether representing capital or labour. If we are employers, we will consider our employees as a family and fight for them and work for their success as we would for the success of our immediate family. Our greatest pride will be to pay them continually more and more,—certainly more than men who make no religious pretension pay for similar services. On the other hand, if we are employees, we will strive to render better service and let the fruits of our religion boldly appear in our work.

This is the way the influence of the churches will be extended; in fact, it is the only way it ever has been spread in the past. It is the great practical step along educational and economic lines in which religious people have so often led, that has given the Church its influence in the past. When our forefathers have sacrificed their properties and even their lives to bring about better conditions, the Church has prospered; but when their children have become lax and less active, the influence of the Church has waned.

The indifference of the average Protestant Church toward national, state, and municipal affairs will not continue much longer. We shall some day close up our little pet charities and devote such time and money toward public improvements and bettering political conditions. We complain about graft and the waste of public funds, but is this not largely due to our indifference? When we devote to bettering political conditions such' time and money as we now give to societies, charities, and other outside organizations, there will soon be a great improvement in government.

We should select our profession, business, or daily work with the object of rendering service. We should engage in the occupation wherein we can render the most service to the community. If we are rendering a real service, we shall be properly rewarded.

IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION

There is no short cut to prosperity. It will come only through the slow process of education. Moreover, this will be supplied to the coming voters of our nation through the public school system. Hence, I believe that the best missionary work which we to-day can possibly do is through our public schools. Here is the greatest opportunity for real good and to which we should devote all our spare efforts instead of bothering with a score of

other things, all of which are worthy in their way; but none of which will accomplish much until the people are convinced of the need of a change and, when so convinced, will themselves bring the change about.

With present methods of representation, the voters of this country are now able to raise funds for any improvements or reforms which they are convinced are worth-while. Therefore, it seems to me that all our efforts should be devoted to developing a really worth-while educational system which alone will create a truly happy and efficient people. The purpose of the churches is to make people truly happy, but must not this be worked out through our school systems?

If so, we must teach in the schools a simple religion of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, and the scientific basis for overcoming evil with good.¹ For teaching this the best characters should be employed, irrespective of church or creed, men and women whom the entire community love and respect. Moreover, not until persons of such character are in demand and paid highly for their services, will such teaching be respected. This has been the history of art, music and literature. Spirituality can be developed only

¹ This basis is Newton's Law that "action and reaction are equal," which the writer explains in detail in another volume.

in the same way, according to the same economic laws. These persons should be allowed to teach no creed; in fact, they would be too wise to attempt it. They should teach by example and precept how to be happy.

Happiness comes through health, knowledge, faith, and a reasonable amount of prosperity. In connection with the study of health, young people must be taught how to keep well, and all methods of municipal sanitation. With this study should be combined justice, courtesy, hopefulness, and personal relationship with others. When studying material prosperity, our young people should be taught this fundamental; namely, that *true success comes only through service*. Hence, each boy should select some one thing, however insignificant in itself, and resolve to do this better than any one else. This, however, requires a knowledge of economics, which every citizen should have. The present system, leaving economics to the college course so that its laws are known only by those who are to become employers, is exceedingly unjust to labour and consumers in general.

Probably giving the masses such an education would inevitably result in a gradual redistribution of property. Although property does not mean happiness, yet for any nation to be happy there must be a much more equal distribution of property than is now wit-

nessed. This great gap will, however, constantly be reduced in size, and manual labour will gradually be rewarded more. The churches will some day encourage the masses in their attempts to become factors in the management of industries. In the meantime all interested in bringing about these reforms should unite actively in the work of some church, and with this new vision become a real factor in spreading the teachings of Jesus.

AN APPEAL

Once when visiting the city of Cleveland, I was taken into the suburbs and shown some buildings looking like the buildings on a college campus. I was told that they belonged to a great business corporation, popularly known as the National Lamp Works. This company is controlled by the General Electric Company and is one of the largest producers of incandescent lamps. Upon asking to go into the buildings to see an incandescent lamp made, I was astonished by the reply:

“No lamps are made out here. All of these buildings are used simply for experimental purposes. The hundreds of people here employed devote themselves simply to discovering more efficient means of lighting and perfecting the present forms now in use.”

It seemed impossible that an industrial

money-making corporation could afford to have such an extensive plant for experimental work, a plant which covered several acres upon which were located not only buildings but a hospital, reading rooms, tennis courts and other forms of recreation. It is almost like a small college town in itself. Yet, not a single lamp is being made there! Not only that but the entire National Lamp Works itself is but a subsidiary of one of our industrial corporations!

All of these buildings and structures are being devoted simply to perfecting one article, an incandescent lamp! What a lesson this should be to the churches of America who are responsible for giving the world a light far greater and far more important than the incandescent lamp! What are the churches of America doing for experimental work? It is true that the churches have their missionaries, preaching the gospel; it is true that the denominations have their colleges to teach and propagate; but what are churches doing along the lines of experimental work to perfect their methods?

When comparing this work in Cleveland with the work that our theological teachers are doing, it puts the Church to shame. Yes, there are many things which the churches must do to get back their power and influence. But the first step is to hold a clinic and diag-

110 THE FUTURE OF THE CHURCHES

nose itself. All of the large denominations should get together at once and build a great institution, not for the purpose of teaching, but for the purpose of studying; not for the purpose of propagating, but for the purpose of diagnosing. This institution should be a great theological clinic with representatives of every denomination and supported by all denominations. It should seek the truth; it should learn how to apply the teachings of Jesus to modern affairs; it should learn how to capitalize the power of prayer.

The churches have the only solution to the problems of to-day. The future of America and the entire world is bound up with the future of the churches; but the churches are not in a position to-day to handle their product. They do not even know what that product is, let alone how to apply it. Hence, the first step for the churches in order to regain their power, is the organization of a great central, scientific institution, operated by the churches and for the churches which shall be to the churches of America what the constitutional convention of 150 years ago was to the government of the United States.

APPENDIX

Some Important Dates for Those Interested in Church History

- 975 B. C.—Death of Solomon.
Revolt of the Ten Tribes.
- 716–712 B. C.—Romulus reputed murdered.
Sennacherib invades Judah.
- 664 B. C.—First sea-fight on record.
- 588–578 B. C.—Captivity of Judah completed and Jerusalem destroyed.
Servius Tullius, King of Rome. Money coined.
- 567–565 B. C.—Conquest of the Etrurians.
First Census of Rome.
- 509–507 B. C.—Brutus and Collatinus first Consuls.
The capitol finished.
- 456–451 B. C.—Cincinnatus, Dictator.
Laws of the twelve tables.
- 413–411 B. C.—Egypt regains independence.
Roman famine.
- 390–376 B. C.—Rome destroyed by the Gauls.
War between patricians and plebeians.
- 337 B. C.—First plebeian prætor.
- 286 B. C.—Law of Hortensius, by which the decrees of the people had the force of those of the senate.
- 266 B. C.—Rome mistress of all Italy.
- 204–202 B. C.—Scipio carries the war into Africa with great applause.
- 181 B. C.—Plague at Rome.
- 133 B. C.—Spain becomes a Roman province.
- 104–91 B. C.—Teutons defeat 80,000 Romans on the banks of the Rhone.
Birth of Julius Cæsar.
Social War in Italy.
- 55–30 B. C.—Cæsar passes the Rhine, defeats the Germans and Gauls, and invades Britain.
Civil War between Cæsar and Pompey.
Pompey defeated.
Cæsar, Dictator.
Cæsar takes Alexandria and conquers Egypt.
Republic of Rome becomes a monarchy.
-
- 54 A. D.—Nero, Emperor.
- 60 A. D.—Paul imprisoned in Rome.
- 77 A. D.—A great plague at Rome, 10,000 dying in one day.
- 117 A. D.—Great persecution of the Christians.
Hadrian, Emperor.
- 193 A. D.—Septimus Severus, Emperor. A vigorous ruler, but persecutes the Christians.
- 270–272 A. D.—Aurelian becomes Emperor.
Great persecution of Christians.
- 306 A. D.—Constantine the Great, Emperor.
Persecution of Christians stopped.
- 475 A. D.—Oligarchy of the bishops of Rome, Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem.
The Church now begins to assume a political aspect.

- 502-511 A. D.—Invasions by the Persians.
Great insurrection in Constantinople.
- 558 A. D.—A plague extends over Europe and Asia and lasts about fifty years.
- 600 A. D.—Introduction of Christianity into Britain and throughout Europe.
- 650 A. D.—The Christian Church very useful and influential in all matters.
- 755 A. D.—Beginning of the Pope's temporal power.
- 800 A. D.—A period of great prosperity.
- 840 A. D.—Feudal system at its height.
- 841-858 A. D.—Hereditary nobility and the clergy dominant in matters of state.
Alfred the Great born.
Nicholas I first Pope to be crowned.
- 890 A. D.—Oxford University founded by Alfred the Great.
Trial by Jury instituted.
- 912-915 A. D.—The Normans in France embrace Christianity.
University of Cambridge founded.
- 940-955 A. D.—Mints established in England.
Baptism of Olga, and conversion of Russia to Christianity.
- 999 A. D.—Hungary becomes a fief of the Church.
- 1059 A. D.—Quarrel between the Popes and the German Emperors.
- 1096 A. D.—Peter the Hermit preaches against the Turks.
The First Crusade.
- 1100 A. D.—Study of theology receives new impulse.
- 1150 A. D.—Another period of great prosperity.
- 1198 A. D.—Power of the Pope supreme in temporal matters.
- 1265 A. D.—Dominion of Italy passes to the Pope, who greatly abuses his power.
- 1303-1309 A. D.—Papal power broken.
Seat of the Popes transferred to Avignon.
- 1416 A. D.—Huss burned for heresy. Revival of real Christianity.
- 1434 A. D.—Invention of printing at Mayence.
- 1450 A. D.—Flourishing period of trade in Western Europe.
- 1493 A. D.—Era of discovery in the New World. (Columbus.)
- 1502-1517 A. D.—St. Peter's and other great churches built.
Beginning of the Reformation.
- 1530 A. D.—Luther at his height.
- 1551-1558 A. D.—Treaty of Passau secures religious liberty to the Protestants in Germany.
Elizabeth, Queen. Rise of the Puritans.
- 1588 A. D.—First newspaper in England.
Defeat of the Spanish Armada.
- 1592 A. D.—The Rialto and Piazza di San Marco built at Venice.
- 1620 A. D.—Pilgrims sail in Mayflower.
- 1649 A. D.—England under Cromwell.
- 1692-1693 A. D.—First opera house opened.
Bank of England founded.
- 1697 A. D.—General peace throughout the world.
- 1703 A. D.—Flourishing period of French literature.
- 1783 A. D.—Independence of the United States acknowledged.
- 1789 A. D.—French Revolution begins.
- 1797 A. D.—Swiss Revolution.
- 1813 A. D.—War of German independence.
- 1814 A. D.—Fall of Napoleon.
- 1846 A. D.—Repeal of the English corn laws.
- 1900 A. D.—The democratic spirit at its height.

